United Nations PBC/6/OC/SR.1

General Assembly
Security Council

Distr.: General
23 March 2012

Original: English

Peacebuilding Commission
Sixth session
Organizational Committee

Summary record of the 1st meeting
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Monday, 30 January 2012, at 10 a.m.

Chair: Mr. Gasana ..... (Rwanda)
later: Mr. Momen. ..... (Bangladesh)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.30 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda (PBC/6/OC/1)

1. *The agenda was adopted.*

Draft report of the Peacebuilding Commission on its fifth session (PBC/5/OC/L.1)

2. **The Chair** recalled that the text of the draft report of the Peacebuilding Commission on its fifth session (PBC/5/OC/L.1) had already been provisionally approved by the Organizational Committee during informal consultations held on 19 December 2011, pending its translation into all United Nations official languages. It was his understanding that the Committee was now ready to adopt the draft report.

3. *It was so decided.*

Election of the Chair and other officers

4. **The Chair** said it was his understanding that the Committee was prepared to elect the new Chair and Vice-Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission and that, in view of prior consultations among the members of the Committee and of the Group of Asia-Pacific States and the Group of Eastern European States, it had been agreed that the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Commission would be from the Group of Eastern European States in 2012 and the Group of Asia-Pacific States in 2013 and that the procedure for the selection of the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Commission and the Chairs of the country-specific configurations and of the Working Group on Lessons Learned would be addressed during the sixth session of the Commission.

5. *It was so decided.*

6. *Mr. Momen (Bangladesh) was elected Chair for a one-year term ending on 31 December 2012 by acclamation.*

7. *Mr. Vilović (Croatia) was elected Vice-Chair for a one-year term ending on 31 December 2012 by acclamation.*

8. **The Chair** said that in view of the special circumstances surrounding the selection of the Chair for the current year, the election of the Chairs of the country-specific configurations and the Working Group on Lessons Learned would be taken up at a later stage. If there was no objection, he would take it that the Committee wished to extend the terms of office of the remaining members of the Commission's Chairs' Group until 6 February 2012.

9. *It was so decided.*

Statement by the outgoing Chair

10. **The Chair** congratulated the incoming Chair and Vice-Chair and wished them success in their endeavours.

11. The road map for actions in 2011 had provided a solid framework for implementing the recommendations emanating from the 2010 review of the United Nations peacebuilding architecture, and there had been progress towards a number of the objectives that he had set for the Commission in 2011. In order to ensure effective national ownership, he had started his tenure by meeting with the Permanent Representatives of the countries on the Commission's agenda in order to involve them more deeply in the Commission's broader policy issues and had insisted that they should be invited to attend all the Organizational Committee's meetings and certain meetings of the Chairs' Group. He encouraged the representatives of those countries to be proactive and to bridge the gap between the Commission and their capitals.

12. In 2011, the Working Group on Lessons Learned and the country configurations had initiated discussions on working modalities, approaches and partnerships for enhancing resource mobilization. Those discussions, along with the new approach adopted by the Commission and the Peacebuilding Fund — which had involved he development of an expanded priority plan for Liberia that was linked to the statement of mutual commitments — was a significant step in the right direction.

13. The Chairs' Group had visited the African Development Bank (ADB) in Tunis on 11 November 2011 in order to deepen the collaboration between the Commission and the Bank and to explore ways of jointly supporting peacebuilding priorities in the countries on the Commission's agenda. The visit had culminated in minutes of consultation that spelled out areas of potential collaboration, including resource mobilization and advocacy, policy dialogue on critical peacebuilding issues, youth employment and complementarity of funding between the Peacebuilding Fund and the Bank. In follow-up to that visit, the

Peacebuilding Support Office was developing a work plan with the Bank for each of those areas. The President of the Bank was convinced that the Commission could help the Bank to further its agenda not only in the six countries on the Commission's agenda, but on the continent at large. Resource mobilization was one of the Commission's biggest challenges, and it should seize the opportunity to work more closely with the Bank and with the World Bank, both of which had established dedicated units and funds for post-conflict countries. He hoped that the Commission would be able to build partnerships with other regional financial institutions as well.

14. On the topic of coordination and coherence, the Commission, guided by the road map and the spirit of the 2010 review, had intensified its interaction with key players both within and outside the United Nations system, including the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Department of Political Affairs and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations. The Chairs of the country configurations had been invited to meetings of the integrated task forces for the respective countries on the Commission's agenda and the Chairs' Group had met, for the first time, with the Senior Peacebuilding Group in order to initiate a dialogue on broad peacebuilding policy. The participation of members of the World Bank's Board of Directors and the launching of the 2011 World Development Report under the Commission's auspices had been significant steps towards recognition of the Commission as the central United Nations platform for all peacebuilding-related policy issues.

15. With regard to knowledge- and experience-sharing, his own Government (Rwanda), in collaboration with the ADB and the Peacebuilding Support Office, had convened a high-level meeting on post-conflict peacebuilding, focusing on Rwanda's experience, in Kigali on 8 and 9 November 2011. That event, which had been attended by the Presidents of Rwanda and Burundi; the Prime Minister of Côte d'Ivoire; and high-level dignitaries from four countries on the Commission's agenda (the Central African Republic, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau and Sierra Leone), Haiti, Timor-Leste, South Sudan, the African Union and the World Bank, was an innovative effort of the Commission to serve as a platform for promoting experience-sharing between countries that had undergone peacebuilding and State-building processes and those that were engaged in or embarking on similar processes. The discussion had focused on inclusive ownership and leadership, innovative approaches to nation-building and socio-economic development, and the strategic use of aid. There was a real need to nurture such cooperation in peacebuilding among countries of the South, and he trusted that the ongoing review of civilian capacity in the aftermath of conflict would address that aspect of peacebuilding cooperation as a matter of priority.

16. On 23 February 2011, Guinea had become the first country without a United Nations mission to be placed on the Commission's agenda. The initiative had widened the scope of potential candidates for inclusion in that agenda and further highlighted the issue of national ownership; the Commission's ability to offer flexible forms of engagement, achieve tangible results and begin to disengage from some countries in which it had accomplished its goals would affect its future work.

17. Lastly, the Organizational Committee should review the Commission's rules and procedures in order to ensure that informal and ad hoc mechanisms, particularly those pertaining to the election of the Chair of the Commission, were formalized. His own election had been particularly meaningful for his country, which had experienced one of the worst conflicts of the previous century but had been able to engage in reconciliation, reconstruction and development thanks to its own efforts and to the support of the international community.

18. *Mr. Momen (Bangladesh) took the Chair.*

Statement by the incoming Chair

19. **The Chair** recalled that his country, Bangladesh, had been proactively engaged in the work of the Commission since its establishment as an institutional arrangement for addressing the root causes of conflict in order to prevent a relapse in post-conflict countries, and he would do his utmost to promote its objectives.

20. While the Commission had made considerable progress, it still faced many challenges. As at 2011, about 1.5 billion people in nearly 35 post-conflict countries still lived in areas affected by fragility, conflict, organized criminal violence and warlords. To date, no low-income, fragile or conflict-affected country had achieved any of the United Nations Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

21. The 2010 review had given rise to a number of recommendations, including with respect to support for national capacity development, resource mobilization, alignment of key actors behind common peacebuilding objectives and adoption of flexible and adaptable instruments of engagement.

22. Bangladesh had achieved independence in the 1970s through a war that had led to the death of millions of people and to the collapse of the country's infrastructure. Its experience was a reminder that economic revitalization focusing on employment, infrastructure development, natural resource management and improvement of law and order and security were essential elements for achieving sustainable peace in post-conflict countries. Advancing the global peacebuilding agenda required solid commitment, broad engagement, sustained and targeted efforts and strong partnership among all major actors, including the United Nations and other relevant institutions.

23. During his tenure, he would strive to address as many as possible of the issues raised in the Chair's road map for actions in 2012 and would welcome innovative and constructive ideas for achieving the common and collective goal of sustainable peace in post-conflict countries.

24. **Ms. Cheng-Hopkins** (Assistant Secretary-General for Peacebuilding Support) said that thanks to the support of partners in the United Nations system and beyond, including non-governmental organizations (NGOs), the Peacebuilding Support Office had been able to increase its capacity to provide substantive support to the Commission with the addition of experts in security sector reform, national reconciliation and natural resource management.

25. The outgoing Chair had helped to forge stronger ties between the Peacebuilding Commission and the ADB, as confirmed during the visit to Tunis, and to ensure that the lessons learned from Rwanda's challenging and complex peacebuilding experience were shared with other countries. The high-level meeting in Kigali had highlighted possible solutions to recurring peacebuilding challenges faced by many countries on the Commission's agenda, as well as the potential for peer-to-peer experience-sharing.

26. Her Office looked forward to the leadership of the incoming Chair and stood ready to support him in fulfilling his mandate.

27. **Mr. Khan** (Indonesia) said that the Commission should strengthen its institutional tools, and particularly its rules of procedure, in the interests of clarity and effectiveness. The process leading to the election of officers for 2012 had demonstrated the need to refine the mechanism for electing the Chair of the Commission. In order to be effective and credible, the Commission required strong leadership from the Bureau and sustained commitment from Commission members and the Chairs of all the country-specific configurations.

28. **Mr. Dimri** (India) commended the Organizational Committee for resolving the issue of the election of the Chair through consensus, leaving the Commission's working procedures, rules and norms intact. He hoped that the newly elected Chair would help foster synergies between all United Nations peacebuilding bodies, including the Commission and the peacebuilding missions and funds. He welcomed dialogue and cooperation with all stakeholders, including regional organizations and international financial institutions, and looked forward to more meaningful dialogue within the United Nations system.

29. **Ms. Jaraud-Darnault** (France) said that her delegation was pleased with the consensus solution to the problems arising from the complex procedure for electing the Chair and strongly supported the Commission's new road map of actions for 2012, which she hoped would be flexible enough to enable the Commission to adapt to new situations. The road map's focus on enhancing the Commission's impact in the field was a crucial component of peacebuilding and should make it possible to foster national ownership and resource mobilization. A stronger relationship should be forged between the Commission and other United Nations bodies and international entities, especially in the context of follow-up to the Fourth High-Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness, held in 2011.

30. **Ms. Dunlop** (Brazil) said that the procedures for electing the Commission's Chair and Vice-Chair and the rotation of regional groups in that context should be clearly defined as soon as possible; she therefore welcomed the issue's inclusion in the road map of actions for 2012. Her Government would continue to support the Commission's efforts to enhance stability and promote development in the countries on its agenda.

31. **Mr. Vitrenko** (Ukraine) said that his delegation was also pleased that a consensus solution to the issue of the election of the Chair had been found and stressed that that procedure must be streamlined as a matter of priority. His delegation had been honoured to serve as Vice-Chair of the Commission and had done its utmost to advance the peacebuilding agenda, including by laying the groundwork for the first joint high-level event of the Commission and the Executive Board of United Nations Women. As a member of the Organizational Committee in 2012, his delegation would make every effort to implement the road map.

32. **Mr. Tagle** (Chile) said that the rules for electing the Chair must be refined. While the Commission had made great progress in the past year, much more needed to be done at Headquarters and in the field and greater coordination with the primary United Nations bodies, such as the Security Council, would be required. His delegation fully supported the road map, which should be a dynamic and flexible tool.

33. **Mr. Jerandi** (Tunisia) said that the Commission was well on its way to working in harmony with all relevant United Nations bodies and had much to contribute to coordinated peacebuilding efforts; the fact that it conducted actions on the ground gave it an advantage over other relevant bodies. The Commission should begin to reflect more on conflict prevention. The outgoing Chair's visit to the ADB in Tunis had fostered dialogue between the Commission and his country and subregion, particularly in light of the recent upheavals in the area.

34. **Mr. Escalante Hasbún** (El Salvador) said that the Commission should seize the opportunity to act as a bridge for the countries on its agenda, linking action on the ground and coordination with other United Nations bodies. He agreed with the representative of France that the road map should be flexible. The Commission's assistance must be effective, coherent, and targeted; each Commission delegation should consider its obligations and the type of assistance and cooperation that it could provide, whether in terms of funds, personnel or other assistance. His Government was particularly interested in strengthening South-South cooperation. A team had been set up in San Salvador in order to prepare specific proposals on how his country could share the lessons learned from its own peacebuilding process with the countries on the Commission's agenda.

35. **Mr. Yamazaki** (Japan) said that the working group on lessons learned, which his delegation had chaired, had further explored the peacebuilding issues of resource mobilization and economic revitalization and had introduced new subjects for discussion, including the partnership between the Commission and the Security Council. His delegation had highlighted those issues in the working group's "Initial Findings of the Chair" documents, which had been introduced in order to complement its Chair's summaries. The Commission had an important role to play, and he agreed that more could be done to improve its procedures.

36. **Mr. Okafor** (Nigeria) said that the process for electing the current Chair of the Commission reflected a growing interest in the Commission's work and the important role that it played in helping to build sustainable peace and development. The election process had also underscored the Commission's guiding principles of inclusiveness and the need for consultations.

37. **Mr. Vilović** (Croatia) thanked the Commission for electing him as Vice-Chair. As a representative of the Eastern European region, he would make every effort to advance the work of the Commission and its country-specific configurations.

The meeting rose at 11.45 a.m.